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SECURITY COUNCIL
Fifty-fourth year

Letter dated 24 March 1999 from the Permanent Representative of Belarus to the United Nations addressed to the Secretary-General

I have the honour to transmit to you herewith a statement issued on 24 March 1999 by the President of Belarus, Mr. A. G. Lukashenka, concerning the situation in Yugoslavia (see annex).

I should be grateful if you would have the text of this letter and its annex circulated as a document of the General Assembly, under agenda item 64, and of the Security Council.

(Signed) Alyaksandr SYCHOV
Ambassador
Permanent Representative of
Belarus to the United Nations

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Annex

Statement issued on 24 March 1999 by the President of Belarus concerning the situation in Yugoslavia

It was with great alarm that Belarus reacted to the decision of the leaders of the North Atlantic Treaty Organization (NATO) to use military force against Yugoslavia, a sovereign State. The North Atlantic Alliance's recourse to extreme and highly counterproductive measures to solve a crisis demonstrates its unwillingness to exhaust all existing means for a peaceful settlement of Yugoslavia's internal conflict; this can only be condemned by the international community.

Such disregard for the opinion of a number of States and the efforts undertaken by international organizations to resolve the Kosovo problem through non-violent means is a demonstration of utter contempt for universally recognized legal norms and jeopardizes the functioning of the entire system of international security.

Belarus wishes to state, once again, that the use of military force against Yugoslavia and the introduction of any foreign armed formations into the territory of Yugoslavia against the wishes of its Government is an open act of aggression that places on the aggressor the full weight of the consequences of such aggression.

Belarus fully supports the Russian Federation's position on the Kosovo problem. Only strict and unconditional adherence to the principles of the sovereignty and territorial integrity of Yugoslavia and the non-use of force can guarantee stable and lasting peace in the region.

Belarus calls for the immediate convening of an emergency meeting of the United Nations Security Council, and for international condemnation of the use of military force against a sovereign State.